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## *Called to Speak for the Lord – the Book of Jeremiah*

A Certain Hope – The New  
Covenant Promised

*May 9, 2021*

**Sermon Text:** Jeremiah 30-31

**Scripture Reading:** Hebrews 9

The Lord had pronounced 70 years of captivity in Babylon and the destruction of Judah for her sins. As usual, there were many false prophets who contradicted Jeremiah's pronouncement, insisting that God's blessing would never be removed from Judah.

Winston Churchill was not a prophet from God, but he did in fact speak the truth in 1934 when he warned again and again that Germany was about to overtake and surpass the size of Britain's own air force. But most of parliament would not have it. On one

occasion just after Churchill gave still another warning, the Prime Minister stood and flatly contradicted what Churchill had just said. No, Germany is not re-arming. No, Germany is not going to build such an air force. No, Britain must not strengthen her armed forces – the secret to peace is *disarmament*. A very short while later, he was forced to admit he was wrong after Hitler arrogantly announced that Germany's air force did in fact exist and that it was now larger than Britain's. Furthermore, Hitler instituted national conscription (the draft) to build his army. All this was in plain violation of the treaty of Versailles, *but no one would or could do anything about it and in the not so distant future bombs would begin to fall on London.*

People crave ignorance. They want to hear a message that says "everything is fine. Nothing to worry about." And that is the heart of the message these false prophets of Jeremiah's day preached. The people loved it. All is well. Nothing to worry about – *even though the storm clouds and rumblings of*

*Hitler's demons were right in front of them!*

You have the very same thing today not only in our own nation, but in the visible church which is supposed to be the pillar and support of the truth. This week I came across these statements in a so-called church's doctrinal statement –

God the Son became a man in the person Jesus Christ, was without sin **and died for humanity's sins**, rose physically from the dead and will come again to earth to consummate history and the eternal plan of God.

People are made in the image of God to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. **Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called sin** which separates us from Him.

I hope these words anger you. They should. This is the plague of the leaven that permeates churches today and it is a false gospel. Everything is fine. Jesus died for the sins of ALL humanity. YOU are valuable and you have *tremendous potential for good*. Your only problem is that you have an attitude of disobedience. An attitude. You just need an attitude adjustment.

And so the people flock to this. They are told they are saved, that all is well, that there is no storm cloud brewing.... In fact this is a doctrine of universalism. Christ died for all. God loves everyone. It's all good. In Churchill's day, anyone who said anything about danger, about needing to rearm, about war ahead, was cursed as a warmonger. Today anyone who speaks against this false gospel is similarly mocked. And that was Jeremiah's experience.

We come then to chapter 30. Follow along as I read and notice how the Lord moves back and forth from the Judah of Jeremiah's day and the Babylonian invasion and their restoration to the land 70 years later, to events that these things are an earthly picture of. David, for example, had reigned in Jerusalem long before this and yet here Jeremiah speaks of David ruling once again.

Jer 30:1-24 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: (2) “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you. (3) For behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the LORD, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it.”

(4) These are the words that the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah: (5) “Thus says the LORD: We have heard a cry of panic, of terror, and no peace. (6) Ask now, and see, can a man bear a child? Why then do I see every man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labor? Why has every face turned pale? (7) Alas! That day is so great there is none like it; it is a time of distress for Jacob; yet he shall be saved out of it.

(8) “And it shall come to pass in that day, declares the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off your neck, and I will burst your bonds, and foreigners shall no more make a servant of him. (9) **But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.**

(10) “Then fear not, O Jacob my servant, declares the LORD, nor be dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save you from far away, and your offspring from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease, and none shall make him afraid. (11) For I am with you to save you, declares the LORD; I will make a full end of all the nations among whom I scattered you, but of you I will not make a full end. I will discipline you in just measure, and I will by no means leave you unpunished.

(12) “For thus says the LORD: Your hurt is incurable, and your wound is grievous. (13) There is none to uphold your cause, no medicine for your wound, no healing for you. (14) All your lovers have forgotten you; they care nothing for you; for I have dealt you the blow of an enemy, the punishment of a merciless foe, because your guilt is great, because your sins are flagrant.

(15) Why do you cry out over your hurt? Your pain is incurable. Because your guilt is great, because your sins are flagrant, I have done these things to you. (16) Therefore all who devour you shall be devoured, and all your foes, every one of them, shall go into

captivity; those who plunder you shall be plundered, and all who prey on you I will make a prey.

(17) For I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal, declares the LORD, because they have called you an outcast: ‘It is Zion, for whom no one cares!’ (18) “Thus says the LORD: Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob and have compassion on his dwellings; the city shall be rebuilt on its mound, and the palace shall stand where it used to be. (19) Out of them shall come songs of thanksgiving, and the voices of those who celebrate. I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will make them honored, and they shall not be small. (20) Their children shall be as they were of old, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all who oppress them. (21) **Their prince shall be one of themselves; their ruler shall come out from their midst; I will make him draw near, and he shall approach me, for who would dare of himself to approach me?** declares the LORD.

(22) And you shall be my people, and I will be your God.” (23) Behold the storm of the LORD! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest; it will burst

upon the head of the wicked. (24) The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intentions of his mind. **In the latter days you will understand this.**

Now, the next chapter sheds much light upon all of this. As I read the first 26 verses, ask yourselves this – *is this an accurate description of the Jews after the captivity and on into the time of Jesus’ earthly ministry?* That is to say, does this picture fit what happened when the Jews under Ezra and Nehemiah returned to the land and rebuilt the temple and the walls?

Jer 31:1-26 “At that time, declares the LORD, I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they shall be my people.” (2) Thus says the LORD: “The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, (3) the LORD appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you. (4) Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall adorn yourself with tambourines and shall go forth in the dance of the merry-makers. (5) Again you shall

plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant and shall enjoy the fruit. (6) For there shall be a day when watchmen will call in the hill country of Ephraim: ‘Arise, and let us go up to Zion, to the LORD our God.’”

(7) For thus says the LORD: “Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘**O LORD, save your people, the remnant of Israel.**’

(8) Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the pregnant woman and she who is in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. (9) With weeping they shall come, and with pleas for mercy I will lead them back, I will make them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble, for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

(10) “Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.’ (11) For the

LORD has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. (12) They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; **their life shall be like a watered garden**, and they shall languish no more.

(13) Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. (14) I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, declares the LORD.”

(15) Thus says the LORD: “A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.” (16) Thus says the LORD: “Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work, declares the LORD, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. (17) There is hope for your future, declares the LORD, and your children shall come

back to their own country. (18) I have heard Ephraim grieving, 'You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the LORD my God. (19) For after I had turned away, I relented, and after I was instructed, I struck my thigh; I was ashamed, and I was confounded, because I bore the disgrace of my youth.'

(20) Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he my darling child? For as often as I speak against him, I do remember him still. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, declares the LORD. (21) "Set up road markers for yourself; make yourself guideposts; consider well the highway, the road by which you went. Return, O virgin Israel, return to these your cities. (22) How long will you waver, O faithless daughter? For the LORD has created a new thing on the earth: a woman encircles a man."

(23) Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Once more they shall use these words in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I restore their fortunes: "'The LORD bless you, O habitation of righteousness, O holy hill!'" (24) And Judah and all its cities

shall dwell there together, and the farmers and those who wander with their flocks. (25) For I will satisfy the weary soul, and every languishing soul I will replenish." (26) At this I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me.

The answer is plain, is it not? This is not a description of post-captivity Israel. This is not a description of the Jews in Jesus' day. This is in fact a description of the true Israel of God whom the Lord is gathering out of the nations and will bring into the restored Eden, the new heavens and earth.

And sure enough, that is exactly what we find as we read on:

Jer 31:27-40 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast. (28) And it shall come to pass that as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring harm, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, declares the LORD. (29) In those days they shall no longer say: "'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.'

(30) But everyone shall die for his own iniquity. Each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

(31) **“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,** (32) not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.

(33) **For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.** And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

(34) And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ **for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”**

(35) Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed

order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the LORD of hosts is his name: (36) “If this fixed order departs from before me, declares the LORD, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever.”

(37) Thus says the LORD: “If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the LORD.”

(38) “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when the city shall be rebuilt for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. (39) And the measuring line shall go out farther, straight to the hill Gareb, and shall then turn to Goah. (40) The whole valley of the dead bodies and the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be sacred to the LORD. It shall not be plucked up or overthrown **anymore forever.”**

This is a vital and central advance in OT history of God revealing His plan of redemption in Christ. Let’s look carefully at this New Covenant Jeremiah speaks of:

- It is a NEW covenant. It was yet future to Jeremiah's day.
- This covenant would be made with *the house of Israel and the house of Judah*
- This new covenant will *not be like the Mosaic covenant*. That covenant was breakable, and it was very soon broken by the people's sin
- The words of this new covenant would not be engraved on stone, but will be written on the hearts of ALL people with whom God makes it. As a result, God WILL be their God and they WILL be His people, unlike the days of the Old Covenant
- Everyone in the New Covenant *will know the Lord. No one will have to keep urging and making them obey Him*. Without exception, everyone in this New Covenant will know the Lord, ie, will belong to Him and be saved.
- The New Covenant WILL effect forgiveness of sins. It will not be a covenant in which sins were merely covered. Actual forgiveness will be that of ALL who are in this covenant.

Now, lest we be left to wonder how this New Covenant is going to be established and who this "Israel and Judah" are that the Lord is talking about, the New Testament answers our questions plainly –

Heb 8:1-13 Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, (2) a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.

(3) For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. (4) Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. (5) They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain."

(6) But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old **as the covenant he mediates is better**, since it is enacted on better promises. (7) For if that first



covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second.

(8) For he finds fault with them when he says: “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, (9) not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. (10) For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (11) And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. (12) For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”

(13) In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Understand? WE are Israel and Judah. WE are heirs of the promise to Abraham. And it is all because Christ has brought the New Covenant into being by His blood.

We read Hebrews 9 earlier – now look at how chapter 10 ends:

Heb 10:12-18 But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, (13) waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. (14) For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

(15) **And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us;** for after saying, (16) “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,” (17) then he adds, “I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.” (18) Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

See it? The Holy Spirit was speaking to US through Jeremiah in these words from chapter 31. WE are the Israel and

Judah of God. This new covenant is effected by Christ apart from works of the Law, *and everyone in this covenant HAS forgiveness of sins*. This covenant will never become “obsolete and grow old and be ready to vanish away.” No, it is an eternal covenant *which cannot be broken*. Because its fulfillment all depends upon Christ, not us.

I hope that you can see in all this – I hope the wheels in your mind are turning pretty fast now – *that any theological system that makes earthly Israel, the physical descendants of Abraham, and the earthly land of Palestine the main focus of God’s plan of redemption is terribly wrong*.

Rom 2:28-29 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. (29) But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

Rom 4:16-17 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (17) as it is written, “I have

made you the father of many nations”— in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

God’s restoration of the remnant of the Jews from Babylon back to Judah was a picture of the real exodus He is effecting even now – bringing His true people out from every nation and tribe and ultimately He will bring us all into the real Jerusalem, the City of God and Eden restored.

Abraham himself knew it -

Heb 11:8-10 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. (10) For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

This is where our eyes must be set. This is the New Covenant and the New people of God, the true Israel, of which we in Christ are members. And this is

the home Christ is preparing for us and where He will certainly see us safely to

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Rev 21:1-4 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. (2) And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (3) And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. (4) He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."